

Categorical Exclusion Documentation Format for Actions Other Than Hazardous Fuels and Fire Rehabilitation Actions

AZ9N2W25001 AML Backfill DOI-BLM-AZ-P010-2011-007-CX

A. Background

BLM Office: Hassayampa Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: N/A

Proposed Action Title/Type: AZ9N2W25001 AML Backfill

Location of Proposed Action: T. 9 N., R. 2 W., SW¼SE ¼ of section 25, G&SRM, Yavapai County, Arizona.

Description of Proposed Action: BLM would backfill a vertical ~40 ft. deep open abandoned mine shaft (AZ9N2W25001) located on public land immediately adjacent to a regularly-used unimproved road. Site surveyed and cleared for cultural resources by BLM Archaeologist Chris McLaughlin in October 2010. Site surveyed for wildlife by the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD) in October 2010, who found that the shaft is not a significant wildlife habitat, and recommended that a wildlife exclusion (chicken wire) be installed over the shaft collar 4 to 7 days before backfilling the shaft. BLM would then use a backhoe to push material from the waste rock dump next to the shaft into the hole. Backfilling the shaft would significantly improve public safety, as the physical safety hazard would be permanently eliminated. The site is located at:

<u>AMSCM identifier</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	<u>UTM coordinates (NAD 83)</u>
AZ9N2W25001	34.08704	-112.419	12S 369087E 3772715N

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan (LUP) Name: Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan.

Date Approved/Amended: April 2010

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s): N/A

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decision(s) (objectives, terms, and conditions):

The Bradshaw-Harquahala Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan, approved April 2010, states on page A-24, in Public Safety – Standard Operating Procedures – Abandoned Mine Lands: “Inspect abandoned mine land sites to identify all

physical hazards presenting a safety risk to the public, and take appropriate action to mitigate any hazards and prevent public access to abandoned mine land contaminated areas.”

C: Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, Appendix 4, J (8) – Installation of minor devices to protect human life, (e.g., grates across mines), and, Appendix 4, J (10) -- Removal of structures and materials of no historical value, such as abandoned automobiles, fences, and buildings, including those built in trespass and reclamation of the site when little or no surface disturbance is involved.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

I considered the following when reviewing the proposed project:

- The act of backfilling the open mine shaft will have a positive effect on public health & safety, particularly given that the site is located immediately adjacent to a regularly used road.
- The co-claimants for the single active mining claim onsite were notified of BLM’s desire to backfill the shaft by certified letter dated August 25, 2010. No response was received.
- A cultural clearance has been completed for the site. No historic features would be impacted by the proposed backfilling. Standard stipulations apply, along with the following special stipulation: “During backfilling work, the contractor will carefully avoid all historic features and structures. An environmental monitor shall ensure that the work is carried out away from all historic features.”
- No T&E habitat or species are present in this area, and there is no significant bat habitat in the shaft to be backfilled, according to wildlife surveys completed by biologists from BLM and the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD). A wildlife exclusion would be installed on the shaft by BLM 4 to 7 days before it is backfilled, to ensure that no bats, owls, or other wildlife remain in the shaft when it is backfilled.

D: Signature

Authorizing Official: _____/s/_____ Date: 11/03/10
(Signature)

Name: Steven Cohn

Title: Field Manager, Hassayampa Field Office

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact Mining Engineer Matt Plis, Phoenix District Office, 21605 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85027, 623-580-5500

Note: A separate decision document must be prepared for the action covered by the CX.

Approval and Decision

Compliance and assignment of responsibility: Matt Plis, Environmental Engineer

Monitoring and assignment of responsibility: Roy Draper, Surface Protection Specialist

Review: We have determined that the proposal is in accordance with the categorical exclusion criteria and that it would not involve any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is categorically excluded from further environmental review.

Prepared by: _____/s/_____ **Date:** 11 / 01 / 10

Matt Plis
Environmental Engineer

Reviewed by: _____/s/_____ **Date:** 11 / 02 / 10

Leah Baker
Planning & Environmental Coordinator

Reviewed by: _____/s/_____ **Date:** 11/03/10

Steven Cohn
Field Manager

Project Description: BLM would backfill a vertical ~40 ft. deep open abandoned mine shaft (AZ9N2W25001) located on public land immediately adjacent to a regularly-used unimproved road. Site surveyed and cleared for cultural resources by BLM Archaeologist Chris McLaughlin in October 2010. Site surveyed for wildlife by the Arizona Game & Fish Dept. (AZGFD) in October 2010, who found that the shaft is not a significant wildlife habitat, and recommended that a wildlife exclusion (chicken wire) be installed over the shaft collar 4 to 7 days before backfilling the shaft. BLM would then use a backhoe to push material from the waste rock dump next to the shaft into the hole. Backfilling the shaft would significantly improve public safety, as the physical safety hazard would be permanently eliminated.

Decision: Based on a review of the project described above and field office staff recommendations, I have determined that the project is in conformance with the land use plan and is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis. It is my decision to approve the action as proposed, with the following stipulation: During backfilling work, the contractor will carefully avoid all historic features and structures. An environmental monitor shall ensure that the work is carried out away from all historic features.

Approved By: _____ **Date:** 11/03/10

Steven Cohn
Field Manager